

News Release

Her Fancy is Flight

By Itollefts on Monday, December 5, 2011

Boredom won't be a problem for Alumna Amy Brown. At any given moment, the 2008 graduate may be driving through North Dakota terrain, boating across a river, or watching from above in her 2006 Cessna 182. Originally from Lake George, Minn., she finds herself living a life she has dreamed about for a long time.



Brown is a game warden/pilot for the state of North Dakota. With that role comes a great deal of responsibility for this young woman, but she remains undaunted.

"In high school as a post-secondary-enrollment-option student, I met with Dan Svedarsky to ask what classes I should be taking in preparation to attend the University of Minnesota, Crookston," explains Brown. "I have known I wanted to be a game warden since I was in my early teens. It combined my interests in natural resources and law enforcement and Crookston happened to be one of just a few places I could pursue my dream."

She discovered her love of flying when she decided to earn her private pilot's license as a student on the Crookston campus. "It is funny that I decided to add a major in aviation, because before I came to campus, the only flight I had ever been on was one to Disney World with my parents," Brown smiles.

"I ended up falling in love with flying," she continues. As a result, her major included law enforcement aviation and natural resources law enforcement. She interned in summer 2008 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Devils Lake, N.D. Brown liked her study at the U of M, Crookston. "It is something I hold dear," she reflects. "I have a lot of respect for Chief Pilot Mike Vivion; he has a lot of experience and a lot to offer students. I learned a great deal from him." It might sound cliché but Brown enjoys the kind of serenity she finds in the air. And, she treasures the opportunity to see what most of the rest of the world will never see from her vantage point in the cockpit.

Her job isn't focused solely on flying. She spends plenty of time on the ground or in a boat on the water. It all depends on the time of year and the demands of the job. She can be involved in a search-and-rescue effort or flying at night looking for spot lighters. "If the state needs a pilot, I am in the airplane," she declares. "As the primary pilot, I am kind of always on call."

Those demands prove the most challenging aspect of her work, but it is a job Brown loves and finds deeply rewarding. Brown is one of only a few women in the field. Vivion explains, "I am not sure how many women conservation officers the states have who also fly, but I'm guessing the number is close to one. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has nine pilots and none of them are women."

Brown doesn't think about this fact much. She is concentrating on the job she has always wanted to do, and that fact is the only one that matters to her.

In the photo: Amy Brown attended the meeting of the Program Improvement Audit Committee for aviation in October.

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